

Freeway planners meet Thursday

By Doug Murphy
Staff Writer

How the South Mountain Loop 202 Freeway will impact traffic tops Thursday's agenda of the South Mountain Citizens Advisory Team.

The meeting will be held in the Learning Center building at the District 6 Center in Komatke, at St. John's Road and 51st Avenue, on the Gila River Indian Community. The meeting begins at 5:30 p.m. and will include updated traffic projections for the

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freeway and surrounding surface streets showing the impact if the freeway is built and what could happen to congestion if it isn't built.

In 2003 it was estimated that the South Mountain Freeway would carry about 160,000 vehicles a day in 2025, about what Interstate 10 at Chandler Boulevard carries today.

And if that number seems large, engineers with the Maricopa Association of Governments say that traffic at I-10 and the Broadway curve will jump from 236,000 vehicles a day in 2003 to 460,000 vehicles a day in 2025.

Voters approved the Loop 202 in 1988, but a shortage of money prevented ADOT from buying all the

land or building the freeway. ADOT has been studying the proposed route, updating the plans, for the past four years.

By the end of April ADOT hopes that the team will make a recommendation on a possible route for the western portion of the project. A recommendation for the eastern half won't be made until later this year. Meanwhile ADOT has been meeting with the Gila River Indian Community to obtain permission to study possible routes south of Pecos Road.

For more information visit the ADOT site at www.southmountainfreeway.com. Supporters for the freeway have their own site at www.complete202.org and opponents have a site at www.protectazchildren.org.

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